

REWRITE



The Magazine of Effective Writing

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HOW MUCH TIME FOR WRITING?

Most writers, especially those who do the writing they do in spite of the family or a fulltime job, dream of the time when they'll be able to "devote all my time to writing". Not so McCready Houston, former newspaperman and author of "No Cabin in the Wilderness" & editor of *FRONTIERS*, publication of the Academy of Natural Sciences. At the opening banquet of the Phila. Regional Conference this author-editor offered a radical opinion. He declared that living exclusively the lonely life of the writer separates you from people. And they are your materials. You need to be closely associated with them to see how and why they act as they do, to understand them and be able to write about them with assurance and conviction.

Mr. Houston says that he does all of that writing that he accomplishes, between 7 and 10 P.M. at night, after a day's work at the office. He believes that having to write in this way, when mixed with the newspaper experience he had, tends to make you "write it, write it short, and write it crisp," as the newspapermen say.

He is one author who is not sorry for himself. He said, "The time I spend each day on the Paoli local is not lost. If you have no thoughts, you will have no readers." He gave specific examples of the mss. he had rounded out in his mind, often with no more than an old envelop and a stub pencil.

As persistent readers of *REWRITE* will recall, I, too, am a firm believer in much of that philosophy. Having been a newspaperman myself, I know that a writer's first obligation is to get ideas down on paper, to do it as effectively as possible, and to do it under whatever conditions destiny throws your way. The world does not owe you a living as the old expression runs. You have to gain a feeling for the competitive spirit. Writers are like baseball players; they do not have to be big, husky guys, but they do require a lot of strength and surplus vitality. They have to live disciplined lives, clean lives, they have to overcome the odds against them.

At the same time, I recognize that everyone is unique. Otherwise there would be fewer writers and much less to write about. So it is foolish to lay down broad generalizations. Or make categorical statements about the one way to be a writer. Some people are at the high point in their vitality during, let us say, the early morning hours, or late at night. The human body is very adaptable, but just as an engine works better when not given an overload, or put under undue strain, so a writer writes best under conditions he has found by intelligent experiment to best suit his capabilities and limitations. For instance, I do my best creative writing during the morning hours. But I have learned to write routine stuff at all hours, even following the evening meal, when my inclination is to relax and do passive projects such as

reading mss., reading for pleasure or getting mental and emotional stimulation in various way. All of these being restful in-taking projects as against the more out-giving and vitality absorbing activities of writing or teaching. Possibly this is a reaction to the ten years or more during which I had to work under intense pressure late at night in covering plays as a dramatic reviewer.

Whatever it may be, I have learned that it is foolish to spend vitality unnecessarily on tangential occupations, when it might better be saved for the immediate work in hand. It cannot be estimated how many good novelists have been lost because they had to earn the living of themselves, and a family, perhaps before they were able to devote what energy they had left to the more important task of writing creatively. In other words, there's no sense in taking it out of one's hide just to live up to the supposedly good principle of mixing with people. Or doing one's serious work as a hobby.

There is a tendency in American life, that should be put in its proper place and also, in its true perspective, of prolonged college and university training, then an almost monastic life devoted to one's career along one narrow line of specialization. The big big industrial firms today have very elaborate personnel departments that make an employee fill out long forms and account very accurately for every year and hour of life. The man who has taken to the open road, shipped before the mast and done odd jobs to see what life is all about, is usually rated as "undependable". Actually, he may be far more mature, and have skills that the man who can turn one little screw in one direction, lacks.

Novelists quickly learn that while there's the element of time, and no one with a huge or ambitious program has time enough to complete all of his dreams, even if he specializes and eliminates every unessential, they must do some of this adventurous roving, if their writing is to retain its fire. Just as they must also allow their fields to periodically and metaphorically lie fallow. They must rest and refill themselves before they can again give out.

Some writers can do this best by having a regular job, as Mr. Houston does. Others, a mother and home-maker cannot. That is why so many women take up writing seriously—after their children are grown. And that is why—it seems to me—the work of some of these older writers lack the spark of genius. It was done with a certain "apartness" from living and the flame of creative joyousness. I believe the same explanation can be given for the artistic failure of certain of the novels of Edna Ferber. She was a little too much the professional specialist, who went into a locale cold-bloodedly to get a story. Paine taking as she did her research, and thoroughly. It lacked that artistic dedication, that comes from throwing one's self "wholeheartedly" into the job. (Turn to P. 13)

REWRITE

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<u>MAKE</u>	<u>William E. Harris,</u>	<u>KEEP</u>
<u>THE FREE</u>	<u>Elva Ray Harris,</u>	<u>AMERICA</u>
<u>WORLD STRONG</u>	<u>Editors,</u>	<u>CLEAN</u>

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS—we cannot be responsible for changes not received in this office ONE MONTH in advance of taking effect. Whenever possible, please give exact date of change. PROMPT RENEWALS save our time, permit us to publish a better magazine, and bring you an increased value for your money.

URGE YOUR FRIENDS TO SUBSCRIBE. As a matter of policy we accept no advertising. This allows us to report the entire field of writing and selling impartially for your best interests. Therefore, we need support from as many writers and friends as possible in order to give you a better, more dynamic magazine. REWRITE is your magazine. Use it.

THE OPPORTUNITY WAITS FOR THE MAN!

Mr. Eisenhower's nomination for president, now an accomplished fact, was not the happy completion of a crusade, although his sponsors tried hard to make it seem that way. He appears to be an able and sincere man, just a little bewildered by the unexpected sweep of his destiny. This perhaps explains a lack of unrestrained enthusiasm on the part of the general public at his victory. We are a case-hardened people now. We have experienced too long the strains and disillusionment of war, we have had our fill of the mismanagement & warped minds of little minds. The world impatiently waits the coming of a strong, unselfish, really competent leader. A man who puts statesmanship above personal ambitions and who does not think in terms of political equivocation.

Knowing almost nothing about Gen. Eisenhower (what an irony that Europeans understand him far better than most of his own countrymen!) we believe that he is capable of being the man the world needs, if he is left alone. We are in all frankness far less worried about his lack of experience than his advisers. A strong man, a man of honest humility, is capable of growth under stress & in times of emergency. If Eisenhower is a man of the character and resourcefulness events have appeared to indicate, he will find ways & means to maintain his integrity and dedication to his job. If he is a weak man, his ignorance and lack of experience will make him a pris-

oner of his associates; the best interests, then, of the American people and the entire world will be retarded.

That brings us to what we consider the real issue facing both conventions. It is the identical issue that is the root of the Cold war. Shall our civilization stand still, or continue its slow, irregular, but persistent march forward along the adventurous road to greater human rights and the more abundant, fruitful life for all? Or shall it slip back into a world of darkness, of greed, of fear, superstitious ignorance and slave labor that the Soviets would have us accept?

The answer to that last question is unmistakable. Less obvious is the one the Republican and Democratic delegates faced. Their first tongue-watering thirst is for victory. But the basic issue is still there after this has been satisfied, and it will remain facing the voters in November. It is unfortunate that this issue has been befogged by political expediency and corruption. Were it unequivocally dramatized, the people would be certain positive of the one uncompromising, inevitable answer.

Much slanderous villification has been wasted on "Socialism". It is time someone reached for a dictionary instead of a file of name-calling clichés. Webster says: "A political and economic theory of social organization, based on collective or governmental ownership and democratic management of the—essential means for the production and distribution of goods." Our ancestors were practicing "democratic management" when they organized and wrote the Declaration of Independence, protesting the right of the mother government to wring unjustifiable taxes out of them. Our present day fellow citizens are practicing a highly progressive form of socialism, when, in their wisdom, they organize a "collective" company to build and administer a great telephone system, or run a mutual savings bank, or invest the community savings of a number of people. (the Am. Telephone and Telegraph Co. and the Mass. Investment Trust are fine examples of the first and last of these.) A cooperative of any kind, whether it is owned in Wall Street or organized by farmers, is a socialistic enterprise.

There is no sin in people working together. Our ancestors believed in it wholeheartedly. Farmers in Lunenburg do it today. The sin occurs when a bureaucracy, be it governmental or industrial and capitalistic, takes over and dictates how life shall be lived. A great depression made the American people a slave race, slaves to their own government. It is time now that we cast off our chains. The world waits eagerly a party and a leader, who are smart enough to grasp the basic issue of our time. Who are progressive enough to help men everywhere to help themselves, to teach them to work together in peace as they sometimes work in war. We hope sincerely Mr. Eisenhower is that man. He could be easily.

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FUNDAMENTALS OF GOOD POETRY

By Elva Ray Harris

THE POET'S WORKSHOP

This month we've gathered together in order to give Helen Nye some helpful pointers concerning her provocative poem.

STORM FLOWER

By Helen Nye

Bold, frowned the cliff on angry sea,
And held aloft the stalwart light.
The wild waves tossed relentlessly
While somber clouds drew fast the night.

She longed for April's joys again.
As whining winds sang summer's knell.
And icy fingers of the rain
Shattered the faded pimpernel.

In response to my request two months ago, that we have more states and communities represented in the Workshop, Carol James of New Jersey sent in a very fine comment. Here it is:

"Mostly I like this poem. In the 1st verse I feel the strength and permanence of the light house and the chill of the weather. 'Icy fingers of the rain' carries the thought along nicely. But just how did that trite 6th line with too many 'w' and 's' sounds, wangle its way in among the good ones?

"Because I like things to end on an upnote, I wish Helen would add another verse, something like this:

"'Sad longing never quickened Spring
Nor held the dark from closing down.
Cold winter tides may lap the feet
Of courage that they cannot drown.'"

That would nullify her title, but it would, I think, also help to counteract the helpless feeling."

Thank you, Carol James. Many people share your liking for poems that end on an upnote. Witness the popularity of Grace Noll Crowell and her cheering verse, for instance, or again, Elizabeth Yates' books. And that is a good point for a poet interested in reaching a wide audience to remember.

Bessie H. Hartling has some interesting & thoughtful comments, too. She says: "The title is confusing, I think. I naturally read the poem expecting to hear about a flower—born of the storm, or sustained through it. Instead, it is shattered. Perhaps such a title as 'Autumn Foretaste', might prove more suggestive.

"The first line in this verse is an inversion, but I like it. I was puzzled by 'She' in the first line, second verse. Does it refer to the bold cliff, a person, or the faded

ed pimpernel? After reading the poem again, I would say the latter was the antecedent. It is so far away from the pronoun, however, the reader has to pause to understand it.

"This poem has some wonderful word-pictures. The first line of the second verse might be changed to add something to the picture instead of expressing a feeling. How about:

"'And cold Death seemed to (walk) again'? (or 'ride'.)

"As it stands, all four of the final lines seem to refer to the faded pimpernel, which is rather too small for the central figure, and not likely to be observed on a night like that. Maybe it is a flower in a storm and its feelings are being expressed. But the reader sees the cliff, the waves, the light reflected by the cliff, the clouds—and last of all the flower."

Joseph Murray Emms is also confused as to what "She" refers to. See writes: "If 'She' refers to a lady, as it seems to me that it does, I like the title. But if it refers to the flower, I don't, since a pimpernel closes in rain or a storm, and so would hardly be a—storm flower."

It is interesting to note the contrast in reader reaction. Mary Grant Charles was not at all confused as to whom "She" refers. She comments: "This well-titled poem is stronger by reason of what is left unsaid. We infer that a woman has been shattered by an emotional experience as is the pimpernel in an autumn storm."

"There are a good many adjectives in this short poem, so perhaps 'angry' could be left out in the first line. ('Wild waves', I believe, takes care of the anger.) The comma, after 'bold', is not necessary. The last two lines of 'Storm Flower' are beautiful."

Yes, I agree the word picture in the last two lines is beautiful, indeed. But I beg to disagree about the omission of the adjective "angry". If "wild waves" came in the initial line, we might do without the "angry," but I don't want to wait till the third line of such a short poem to find out what kind of sea we are talking about. I don't want to be allowed to conjure up a picture of a peaceful sea, only to have it change when I come to those "wild waves".

Another Helen, Helen Betikofer, makes the constructive comment to Helen Nye:

"I like your poem because you paint visual word pictures. Some of the phrases are a bit trite, I suppose, like 'wild waves' and 'somber clouds' and 'summer's knell,' if one wants to be finicky about it. Nor do I care for 'whining winds sang'. I would prefer in the course of this poem a change of rhythm. The cliff and the battering waves and storm clouds seem to call for something more dramatic to my ear."

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"It seems to me also that the two verses, in a way, do not exactly belong together. In the first verse there is drama, but a gentler spirit in the second. To my understanding the first verse pictures the bold cliff and the angry sea at night. The second verse in surprising contrast brings in an unexpected woman observer who longs for spring. Nothing in the first verse has hinted of her. In fact, I feel annoyed with this female, who gets in my way.

"So this reader, at least, loses her first impression of the frowning cliff and towering waves in the first verse, and from wild and stormy night she is let down to a—mere drizzle and some shattered flowers in the final verse."

Helen says she likes this poem well enough so that she is going to try a revision, using a different idea in the second stanza—keeping the focus on the cliff. Here is her revision. Note also that she has changed the rhythm.

"High frowns the cliff on angry sea,
Barring the light
From waves that thunder ceaselessly,
Under the coming night.

Life awaits morning calm again,
As storm clouds lock,
And blurring fingers of the rain
Merge sea, and rock."

Well, what do you think of it? Personally, (and it may be simply a matter of my personal opinion or choice) I like the rhythm the original version offers better. The steady marching beat of the tetrameter in each succeeding lines seems to bring out the relentless quality of the storm. The storm will go on relentlessly without let-up, and without change. But Mrs. Betikofor's alternating lines (long, short, long, short) suggest a change is possible. The fourth and fifth lines (in the revision) vary too much from the pattern Mrs. Betikofor has set up in the first three. Such a short poem does not benefit from the marked variation we see here.

Helen Nye has made an interesting comment concerning the rhythm of her own poem: "Intentionally departed from the metric pattern in the last line of stanza two," she says, "to give the effect of everything having, in the climax, been shattered." She refers, naturally, to the clipped iamb in the first foot of the line.

Like most of the others, I was confused a bout "She". I liked the subtle quality that Mrs. Charles spoke about. But I wished that the "She" reference were not quite so subtle. If the pronoun had been masculine and the poem bore a different title, one would think, perhaps, it was the cliff that longed for—April's joys! Whether or not that would make a good poem depends upon whether you as the reader could accept the personification of an

inanimate object such as a cliff. Such personification is objectionable to some readers, but there is also a wide audience that would enter wholeheartedly into the spirit of the illusion and enjoy that kind of writing. Perhaps *Helen Nye* thought of the cliffs as being feminine, the kind of woman with a quiet strength. If this is the case, simply by changing "the" in the second line to "her", "her stalwart light", the reference to "She" in the second stanza could beleared up.

This poem has a lot to sink your teeth into, and it has been fun discussing it. Just as the other members of the Workshop stated, it contains some vivid images in spite of the trite phrases. It would be fun, too, to hear from Helen as to whom or what "She" refers. This Workshop should work both ways. It is good for a poet to get the reaction of readers, and it is interesting and helpful to a reader as a critic and appreciator to know, as exactly as possible, what is going on inside the mind of the poet when she is creating.

In October we discuss:

GRIEF'S DESOLATION

A wind came sighing through the trees,
In the wake of storm and knew no rest.
The grass salaamed on bended knees
And sent its supplication to the west.

The horizon was dark with somber clouds.
The sun went listlessly over the sill
Of night, and left in its wake tinged shrouds,
Which faded to a gray and murky frill.

And in the wood no sound was heard,
Through the cloying damp of rain-soaked

Except one weary note from a lonely bird:
Then all was quiet as a heart that
 grieves.

Clarence C. Adams

Deadline for comments on this poem: Sept. 10th. Get them in earlier if possible, And double spaced on a separate sheet of paper. This enables us to forward all comments, so the author gets the maximum of help from the Workshop. And please make them good & thorough! Mr. Adams has been a faithful member, in sending in his comments in the past. He asks now that it is his turn, that all fellow critics be just as hard on him as he has been on them. Also, send in your poems with your comments. We pay \$1.00 for each poem I use for discussion. Good luck till the next time!

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REPORT ON FICTION AT THE LHM

A rather surprising and very factual summary of the present state of the big circulation (slick) fiction market was given recently by Rosemary Jones. She does a job of general editing at LADIES' HOME JOURNAL. She was substituting for Betty Jane Kidd & used the latter's notes, in addressing the Phila. Regional Writers' Conference opening dinner audience. (Mrs. Kidd is a contributing editor.)

That the fiction market has contracted is shown by the following figures:

1925 9 mags., 1,486 stories pub., 444 authors

1951 " 780 " " 499 "

Moreover, in 1925 5 authors sold 8, or more, stories, whereas in 1951 only one author did as well. Those figures cover the entire big slick field for short stories. They show in a graphic manner that non-fiction has become more important. To use the speaker's phrase, "We read with desperation." She quoted Bernard DeVoto as saying that the chances against the new author are about 5,000 to 1. But in the LHM office they consider the odds about 1,100 to 1. They read 20,000 unsolicited mss. (fiction) a year.

A point these two editors stressed heavily is the importance of the new writers. A new, fresh viewpoint is always eagerly picked up. But the editors of LHM would like to hold on to the promising writers they find. They find this difficult, however, because, as the figures quoted above indicate, "most top slick writers find it impractical to live on their earnings from short stories alone."

Looking at it from the editor's angle and using Mary Elizabeth Vroman and her notable story, "See How They Run" (June, 1951) as an example, Miss Jones pointed out that inevitably following discovery of a new writer of Miss Vroman's ability, there develop opportunities for extra earnings in radio, movies, TV, reprints, etc. The result is the writer is soon drawn away to the larger and usually more lucrative fields. "And so the slick magazines have lost another short story author."

It is for this reason that the LHM editors emphasize the open door that constantly confronts the new writer who is skilled in his handling of fiction. (In personal conversation with Bill afterwards, Miss Jones stated quite frankly that writers like Miss Vroman, who reach the top on the first try are the exception rather than the general rule. She agreed with Bill that for the most part young or inexperienced writers lack the ability to hit the slicks until they've first been successfully apprenticed in the secondary or smaller magazines.) As proof of the friendly atmosphere, Miss Jones cited the card-file for every story (which is read twice), containing a summary of plot, and brief comment.

NEWS ABOUT MARKETS

The WINGED WORD, Sheldon Christian, Brunswick, Maine, has been suspended after eleven years of publication, during which it has steadily grown in stature as one of the best of the little poetry magazines. Although it paid only in prizes, it was a prestige market and a great training ground for serious poets. Mr. Christian's standards were exacting and his attention to details, including his correspondence with poets and others, painstaking. But other interests occupy him.

In the name of all poets, we have pleaded with Sheldon not to give up his magazine. He is continuing his editorship of a small magazine, for which he is paid. (The WINGED WORD was his hobby.) He is also writing himself, and continuing the Peleposcot Press, producer of fine privately printed brochures & books. However, for whatever good it will, we urge all poets and those with a love of good poetry, to impress Mr. Christian with the need for his continuing his editorship, or making some provision for the maintenance, of such an excellent magazine as The WINGED WORD.

ST. JOSEPH Magazine, Mae Heggie, St. Benedict, Ore., (See July REWRITE for new rates of payment), won first prize in fiction and a third in articles, and also in all-around quality, at the recent annual Convention of the National Catholic Press Association. Mae Heggie is a fine friend of all writers. Several non-Catholic members of the WCS Family have won acceptances from her. A variety of tolerance and respect for simple goodness irrespective of creed or race, that could well be carried right down the line within & without a lot of religious sects, both large and small. (As the saying is: "If the cap fits, wear it.") ("In its class, Mae adds modestly.)

"Books and Authors" Book Column. Nicholas Zook, Fitchburg news correspondent, for the Worcester TELEGRAM, is conducting a column, on Fridays, covering news and comment about the literary world. Publishers and authors, incidentally, would do well to feed it news with area or general reader interest. Zook recently interviewed Bill about the value of summer conferences, a subject Bill spoke on at the opening banquet of the Phila. Regional Conference.

Writers' Articles for Writers. Whenever a writer establishes a reputation for writing a special type of material, he frequently & quite naturally experiences a yen to do the inevitable piece telling other writers how-to-do-it. In our experience, this is wasted time, except for the articles used by THE WRITER, and the shorter pieces used by that magazine and AUTHOR & JOURNALIST. (A number of writers, both professional and inexperienced, have reported great difficulty getting final o. k.s elsewhere in the field, even when a tentative green light has been offered.) The pay is very small, and the only advantage is the possible prestige and handle to one's name as an "expert".

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NEWS AT WCS HOUSE

As we went to press Bill was expecting to attend the 12th Annual Maine State Writers' Conference at Ocean Park, Aug. 7/8th. Besides exhibiting an extensive magazine display, as well as books for writers, and the Central Ms. Markets File, he was scheduled, during the first day sessions, to take part in the panel of editors. A discussion of authors' gripes and questions about writing & selling. Chairman: Loring Williams, editor, AMERICAN WEAVE.

Here at WCS House, thanks to the schedule of attending the Phila. Regional Conference and then the Maine State Conference, we have enjoyed a less rushed summer for really the first time in 15 years. Although it is Bill's 18th year of attending summer conferences, a rather unique record, we have been swimming, gardening and reading more mss. submitted to WCS than has been possible in the past.

While in Maine, Bill hopes to be able to attend a special meeting of the Piscataquis Pens — the writers' club that grew out of a writing group led by Doris Marston, Cape Neddick, Me. Several members are also members of the WCS Family, as is Doris, long term friend of Bill and Elva.

Our Billy has started to learn the publishing business from the ground up. Shortly after his 7th birthday he took over a newspaper route in our little neighborhood. And now he has also started scrambling with some of his little friends for the privilege of recovering the pop bottles at our weekly band concerts on the Lunenburg Common. The kids earn a free drink for each case a couple of kids lug back to the stand. Various organizations in Town finance their activities by the profits, and a good time is had by all. Recently, Billy's special friend, Bill Hoyt, from West Medford, spent a week with us and thought it would be a good idea to remain a lot longer. We all agreed. His family didn't.

The APCSTLE, Edward J. Kubaitis, 8800 So. Archer Ave., Willow Springs, Ill., This is a change of address.

THIS WEEK, David McKelowney, Cincinnati, O. (Not the weekly newspaper supplement of the same name), which apparently was listed in a writers' magazine, is apologizing for delay in reporting, due to "prolonged illness" of the editor.

ANIMALS, W.A. Swallow, 180 Longwood Ave., Boston 15, Mass., uses a fairly detailed rejection slip. Writers should not forget the fact that this is the magazine of the Mass. Soc. for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and that it has a list of strict taboos. It also receives a good deal of material in an annual photo contest. Full title: OUR DUMB

Add B. A. Column. Ben Temple has had stories & front page quotes in the Boston POST.

THIS MONTH'S BOOK

WRITING FICTION. Robert Smith. The World Publishing Co. \$3.50. A thoughtful, sincere and quite helpful book by the founder of one of the correspondence schools of writing. Very refreshing is the fact that it doesn't plug the school, and the author is not afraid to comment adversely on some well known writers with specific examples of their weak points.

BOOKS WE CAN RECOMMEND

TELEVISION WRITING. Robert S. Greene. \$3.75. An inexpensive book an expert and a practicing author in the medium. We recommend it.

THE STORY WRITER. Edith Mirrilees. \$3.00. A fine book by a great teacher of the short story. We recommend it highly.

WRITING FOR CHILDREN. Mabel L. Robinson. \$2.75. One of the best books about juvenile ('teen age) writing. It has been selling for years.

PAYING POETRY MARKETS. Virginia Randall & Russ Davison. \$2.00. A new and very useful listing of poetry markets. Invaluable. The editors incorporate late changes into all the copies they distribute, which is unusual. We recommend it highly. Special lists, \$1.00.

NOTE: Buy all your books from WRITERS' BOOK CLUB. You save postage and earn a Book Dividend. We don't list many writing books because we wish to save the space for markets. But we will gladly advise you as to the best books for you. Our job is to help you invest your money wisely.

The WCS Circulating Library. It works to save you money. It costs only \$2 a year, plus postage both ways. One month, plus transportation time, to read. After that 25¢ per month fines, which are used to buy more books. It enables you to read books inexpensively before you decide to buy them for your permanent library.

GARDEN Magazine has suspended, says RURAL NEW YORKER.

THOUGHT & ACTION, Roy Hessen, Jefferson Ave., Amityville, N. Y., (July 7th) has revised & gain its pay rate: articles, 1¢, but "we pay as much as 2¢ for articles on philosophy, paleontology, photography and psychology." No pay for fiction and poetry, but pays on acceptance. Single copies cost 25¢, but yearly sub. rate has been reduced. It's a quarterly, but publishes special issues, which, extraordinarily, are free to subscribers! A special summer issue is being distributed.

COSMOPOLITAN (Aug. issue), we were informed just before press time, carries an article about rackets in the writing business. A good deal of help in the research was given author Morton Sontheimer, via interviews, by Bill Harris, A.S. Burack, editor of The WRITER, and others. Read it & comment!

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HOW'S YOUR BATTING AVERAGE?

Here are the acceptances reported & noted during the past month:

Leta M. Edwards

Poems: DENVER POST, WINGS, Florida Mag., of VERSE, WESTMINSTER, AMERICAN WEAVE, SCIMITAR & SONG and the LABOR Mag.

Helen Miller Swift

Article: FARM JOURNAL (July).

Dorothy Holman

Article & Pictures: FAMILY HERALD & WEEKLY STAR (Montreal, Canada).

Letter: WOMAN'S DAY (Neighbor's Section). Sketch: SHORELINER (July).

Picture & Caption: MARKET GROWERS JOURNAL.

Gertrude Durand

Poems: BLUE MOON (2).

Mary G. Charles

Poems: The ARCHER, Montreal GAZETTE (re-print).

Lydia Lion Roberts

Articles: THIS DAY & C.S.MONITOR.

Rebecca Phillips

Picture Story: THIS DAY, FAMILY HERALD & WEEKLY STAR (Montreal).

Frances Durland

Short Stories: FORWARD, Am. Baptist Publication Society.

Della M. Hollingsworth

Short Story: YOUNG PEOPLE (Baptist)

Mildred Revercomb

Short Story: YOUNG PEOPLE'S STANDARD.

Marjorie S. Scheuer

Poem: C.S. MONITOR, KALEIDOGRAPH.

Helen Langworthy

Article: BUILDERS.

Filler: ("Sunny Hours") C.S.MONITOR.

Joseph Murray Ems

Poems: AM. BARD, Boston HERALD, & POST.

Maxine Block

Article: YOUR LIFE. (Agented by REWRITE subscriber Ingrid Hallen.)

NOTE: send in your news. Help yourself and your friends. Make this column a valuable indicator of what editors are buying. And send us any news you pick up.

A Bequest to the WCS Family. A few days ago came from Mr. Albert F. Wigley a touching note, saying that he was forwarding some books that his beloved wife, Laura, had requested him to give us. We are grateful.

NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

The American Group, Societe des Amis de la Bibliotheque Nationale et des Grandes Bibliotheques de France, which was suspended during the war, has been reactivated. Details: Prof. Casimir D. Zdanowicz, act. sec.-treas., 2214 Commonwealth Ave., Madison 5, Wis. It is contact for writers using the French libraries. (File the address for reference.)

The SURVEY suspended with publication the May issue, Survey Associates, Inc. informed T. & A. NEWSLETTER.

The AM. DAIRY GOAT NEWS has "moved & left no address," the Post Office reported to the same authority recently.

Question. Is it ethical to send to several editors simultaneously a query regarding a single prospective article? Answer. I don't see any great harm in it. Two thoughts come to me. (1) If it's a particularly timely or interesting idea, such a technique is likely to set off a chain reaction interest, so that ultimately several articles might show up in print at about the same time. The editor who bought the piece from you might be annoyed at this. He could consider that the exclusive, unique quality of the idea might be tarnished.

And (2) the editors who had been queried, but were not permitted to see the completed article until it appeared in a rival's magazine, would be only human if they appeared less enthusiastic the next time you query.. All of which adds up to the thought that in writing if you wish to hit the jackpot, and the big stakes, you have to be willing to be something of a gambler. A big, exclusive idea is always worth more in the long run in most editors' estimation than one that seems shopworn. Sometimes it is worthwhile to let your shoes get holes in them in order to be first at the market with the best & freshest stock available. Certainly, editors if they know you made sacrifices to help them, they are likely to be appreciative. Of course, an exception is to be found in every pack. But as in baseball, it is wise to know when you had best play the percentages, and when the gamble that catches the other team off balance, is likely to pay off. In the long run though, it never hurts to treat editors the same way that you'd surely treat yourself.

The Center Box. The quote is taken from Raymond B. Fosdick's book, "The Story of the Rockefeller Foundation". You can apply it equally well to writers. Sometimes, when you think if you just had a million dollars, you could be a swell writer, reread this quote. Money may make your task easier, but it won't supply the idea. Your interest in people, your curiosity over how and why they're willing to live as they do, is the spark.

REWRITE

DO YOU WIDEN A READERS EXPERIENCE?

In the July issue of ST. JOSEPH, Rev. Albert Bauman, O.S.B., St. Benedict, Ore., we read a most interesting and sympathetic article, "Psychoanalysis and Confession". Every writer should read it. It explains satisfactorily why this ably edited magazine is considered by the National Catholic Press Association one of its top-ranking members. It also provides plenty of stimulating thought for writers about (1) the inner workings of people's minds and emotions; (2) about what writing does for people.

I should like to run through this article, Rev. John A. O'Brien, Ph.D., Univ. of Notre Dame, is the author, and make a few points, which are of value to writers. "Psychoanalysis," he explains, "seeks to relieve tensions to dissolve complexes, to release strangulated emotions and thus to restore mental calm ... Psychoanalysis had its origin in the discovery of the therapeutic effects of confessing or revealing the secret causes of inner discords to a sympathetic auditor or father confessor."

Writing has a direct relation to the task thus described. Reading also has a therapeutic value, too. Remember that Aristotle had discovered the purgating influences of ancient Greek tragedy. That is why we emphasize the reader's intense desire to live vicariously. I keep telling you that the reader's ambition is to participate in what he reads as if it were his own emotional experience, and as if it were happening to him right here in the living present in front of him. You can see, I am certain, that that enables him to enlarge and understand better his experience. Just as he does when he lies on a psychiatric couch or kneels in the Confessional. Indeed, it is a cheapening of that process that the publishers of the Confessionals have shrewdly appropriated to their own use. I cannot stress too strongly the fact that, psychologically, that is the great appeal of reading, even though we may think we're seeking entertainment. The wise writer realizes at once his opportunity and the great, compassionate service he can render. In such a sense, it becomes at once a great privilege, and a responsibility to be a writer, even on the smallest level.

Dr. O'Brien tells briefly how psychoanalysis began through the treatment of a case, severe hysteria, by Dr. Joseph Breuer, preceptor of Freud. One day the young patient, a girl, said: "Dr. Breuer, if you would only let me talk to you and if I could tell you how my difficulties started, I think we could do something." That in essence is how we at WCS House work with writers in personal conference over their story problems. And how a writer works alone.

On another page I have emphasized the necessity for exploring the human relations as the basic way of developing plot & character-

ization. As you think through every possible relationship, including the technique, form, time and space, etc., and think about these as two-way relations, you do unconsciously what Dr. Breuer and Anna did. You analyze your problem, be it connected with the writing or selling, or the human problem of understanding your reader and, indeed, your own self. You get to know all about a problem: its origin, its reason for existing, & what is necessary to achieve the solution.

Even a simple feature article, story or a poem is serious business. And if you are to achieve the full effect, you need to apply, develop, use as fully as possible the scientific and imaginative (creative) processes of the scientist. "Gradually Dr. Breuer became convinced of one fundamental principle, namely, the importance of getting the patient to go back to the origin of the symptom and to relive the experience with the proper (natural) emotional expression." (Anna was unable to drink. This mental block vanished as soon as they discovered that as a child she had an English governess whom she disliked, and the latter had a dog whom Anna abhorred. One day Anna saw the governess allowing the dog to drink out of a glass. Anna, out of respect (and fear?) for the governess, repressed her disgust at this horrid sight. Years later, the unfulfilled emotion welled up in her. But when she and the doctor talked the matter over and she was able to give full expression to her disgust, she regained ability to drink from a glass.)

Story-telling may be only story-telling. A story, however, creates a little world of illusion. And this is controlled by the same, inexorable laws of logic, of cause and effect as the life it seeks to portray. Do you see how logical is each step of that regurgitated emotional experience of a sensitive child? There is the "why?" and "how?" of good fiction there. In the same way, the skilled author, like the psychiatrist, imaginatively, wisely must understand his little world. A good story is not like life, it is life itself. Story-telling may not go as far as psychiatry, but it parallels the so-called "cathartic method" developed and refined by Dr. Breuer and Dr. Freud. And by helping to release the evil clutch of man's age-old confusions and fears, the story-teller performs a high professional task.

Jesus knew well the values of the parable and also of the compassionate representative of God sitting beside a well talking to the man or woman who has sinned. Dr. O'Brien is cognizant of the special values of the confessional, superior to the psychiatrist and his chair because of the religious faith, & the nearness to God. Without actually saying so, he indicates clearly and unequivocally, that wherever the confessional retains that spiritual vitality and faith, it continues, unswervingly, its beneficent healing powers. And contrarily, where it has become merely a stereotyped artifice of ritual, it is being

REWRITE

supplanted by psychiatrists, laymen who often are not trained in the religious and imaginative sensitiveness of their calling.

The same thing may be said of writers. We see on all sides proving this. In the wide-sweeping popularity of the written & spoken or visualized word, there has developed the pandering sort of writer, who will sell any sort of poison to earn a nickel, who creates neuroses instead of helping to purge them. A need for the psychiatrist has thus arisen & Fr. O'Brien points out that great Protestant ministers, such as the Rev. Harry E. Fosdick, like their Catholic brethren, are discovering the need of a Protestant confessional in which the priest and the trained psychiatrist unite to solve the problems of "sin & spiritual misery with sympathetic and intelligent treatment.

Many of us, who belong to a profession even older than the Church, for did not those who tell stories help men to understand themselves and their experience when men's minds were still shrouded in superstition? forget that therein lies the rich opportunity & the privilege of the writer. Think back through the whole of history and recall that all of those writers whose tales are remembered, & handed down from generation to generation—a priceless heritage unconquerable by self-styled dictators—have been men of character and principle and faith. Men who praised the joy of living. Men who practiced in the stories they related, the best phases of the priest and the psychiatrist, as well as the entertainer. However humble they may be, the stories that leave you with a lift are stories of courage, creative living & faith.

We have consistently warned you, and told you in **REWRITE** that this is a moral universe in which we live, and that the story-tellers art is fundamentally concerned with the moral issues. Even the six-shootingest pulp is suspensively excited over the difference between Good and Evil. Without of necessity accepting implicitly the generalized distinction between various religions presented by Dr. Jung, we may well close this article by quoting Fr. O'Brien's final two paragraphs. They are at once a challenge and a practical suggestion to writers.

In the last analysis, peace of mind rests upon a living faith in God as the cosmic underwriter of the validity of spiritual values, thus enabling the individual to forge for himself a satisfying philosophy of life. A patient's lack of such a spiritual outlook will stymie the efforts of the most resourceful psychiatrist. Such is the conclusion reached by the eminent psychiatrist, C. G. Jung, as the result of the experience of a life time.

Enthusiasm, Inspiration and Significance, probably in that order, are the things readers look for in books, magazines and the other forms of entertainment they reach for. Do you hook them purposefully with those ingredients? You better had!

"During the past thirty years," he says, "people from all the civilized countries of the earth have consulted me. I have treated many hundreds of patients, the larger number being Protestants, a smaller number Jews, and not more than five or six believing Catholics. Among all my patients in the second half of life—that is to say, over thirty-five—there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them felt ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook."

NEWS IN THE MARKET PLACE

The **HORN BOOK**, Jennie D. Lindquist, 248 Boylston St., Boston 16, Mass., offers \$50 for a Christmas story (1,800 - 2,500 words) which may be legendary, imaginative or realistic, but must have the distinctive quality set by Ruth Sawyer's "This Is the Christmas" & Julia Sauer's "The Light at Christmas". These were published in 1945 and 1949 respectively. Obviously, the stories must appeal to the children and young people who read the magazine about books for children. "We are not interested in any other kind of story or fiction material, it should be emphasized." The contest closes June 1, 1953. The refusal of permission to reprint in book form is taken by the publishers. Address "Christmas Story" as above.

Mrs. Emma Enrick, who has made a phenomenal success of the Magazine Dept. of the Old Corner Book Store, now controlled by Double Day & Company's string of retail bookshops, has been appointed manager of the Book Shop—which is managed by the Old Corner for the Women's Educational & Industrial Union, 270 Boylston St., Boston, Mass. We wish her lots of luck. Many writers enjoy her friendly interest in their magazine requirements.

"**WRITING FOR CHRISTIAN PUBLICATIONS**". New book on a specialized form of writing to be published in the fall by Judson Press. The author is Edith F. Osteen, director of the **CHRISTIAN AUTHORS' GUILD**. She was one of the staff at the recent Phila. Regional Conference. A very friendly, helpful person. The **WRITERS' BOOK CLUB** will take orders. They'll count towards Book Dividends.

Percentage Play. In baseball you continually play according to the percentages for or against you. Here are some interesting figures compiled by the **Association of Canadian Advertisers**, and passed along to us by a member of the **WCS Family**, Orville E. Reed, a good mail-order man. It is believed that:

2% of sales follow the first call;
3% are made on the second call;
3.5% result from the third call;
10% come on the fourth call;
81% are made on subsequent calls.

This should be comforting to writers. It proves that you are lucky if you hit your editor the first time you ring his bell.

The percentages, however, of success in selling **ms.** rise sharply, if the author's campaign includes careful planning before he rings the bell. The percentage of that writer who closes his eyes, selects a **ms.** and sealing it in an envelop, fires it at the first editor his thumb stops at in the market list, is always low.

You can't always be right in your aim & timing. But you can eliminate as many rejection factors as possible before you mail the **ms.** That is sharpshooting, selective selling.

REWRITE

THE PROSE WORKSHOP

Closing Dates. The Summer schedule:

No. 12. A Dramatic Scenario. Tell us a story. Make it so dramatic and thrilling a description of the idea, that an editor will want it. Imagine you write him a letter, or sit in his office. He wants to know what the story is about.

Closes: Sept. 10. Make it brief!

No. 13. A Flashback Opening. The ideas to give the last few lines of a scene. Then get back into the "secondary present" as quickly as possible. (A professional can do it in one sentence.) You should end with just enough wordage to suggest the remainder of the flashback scene. We leave the wordage to you. It should be brief, though! study some of the published stories.

Closes: Oct. 10.

The July Workshop was small. Only 4 mss., and only one comment about the filler which we used in the June issue! (NOTE: before you read my comments in the next column, go back and write a comment on Mrs. Everly Barton's filler.) I am sorry that my comments didn't get in the July issue, as scheduled.

Here is the Suspense ms. which wins a \$1. It is not the best of the 4, but it easily, I think, will promote the most interesting, helpful criticism. Do your stuff, all of you!

"I must get Woodrow out of here before Pa spoils everything. Clarabel fidgeted, while Pa fired the usual questions and Woodrow answered respectfully. 'Yes, I like working for Kenton. Riverton is a fine town. I graduated from the University in '40.'"

Clarabel breathed a silent prayer. Thank you, God, that Woodrow finally noticed me.. Please, God, don't let Pa get started on 'Clarabel is going to be an old maid'.

'Yep,' Pa was saying, 'Clarabel tells me, that the Kenton Co. is a fine outfit, but I keep a-tellin' Clarabel--'

'Pa, it's time for Amos and Andy,' Clarabel twirled the radio knob.

Woodrow followed her to the door as Pa cackled, 'Have a good time--I keep tellin' Clarabel--'

Sue Magee

The one comment on Mrs. Barton's filler about Mom was a highly critical one. Mrs. Julia F. Polinski said she disagreed with everything Mrs. Barton used in her filler. Her point which was a good one, was that Mrs. B. was essentially depressing and destructive. She felt that other moms in reading it would be hurt and not helped. That it ridiculed &

wounded without being funny. "Why can't she take the same idea," suggested Mrs. Polinski, "and reverse it into an uplifting piece that will help Mom in her low moment?" That is a good thought. Of course, editors live sometimes by stirring up a good old fashioned & argumentative controversy. And sometimes we writers do write with our tongues in cheek, meaning to get something off our chest, and to be funny at the same time. But it is one of the basic fundamentals to remember there are readers who accept words too literally. And these readers are apt to come out swinging, as they say in boxing. And no editor is pleased at offending his readers.

Mrs. Polinski has a high regard for moms. She believes that they tend to grow mentally and spiritually with experience and that eventually they learn to follow the dictates of their hearts. She feels that if they are failures, they would be in any other line. "I will bank on Mom to come out on top--every time!" I suspect that Mrs. Barton has an equally high regard for Mom. But she did not have the sense of strategy to end her filler with a bit of humor.

"Say it--with a smile", or "Smile when you say that!" is good advice that the professional learns to make an instinctive part of his equipment. That explains why so many of the selling writers use too much wise-cracking, or always end with a punch-line having a laugh, and, more important, a lift. Sometimes to an experienced reader this seems to be done perfunctorily. It is technique rather than the real thing. But it gets by, perhaps because people and editors want the human touch. It is a wise writer, who picks up the trick of being objective, impartial and yet human. It is that paradox I mentioned a few months back of being impersonal yet personal.

I personally felt that Mrs. Barton failed to give her piece the light touch, although I believe she intended to. There is power in the carefully built up succession of short, punchy paragraphs, and then the smash punch or surprise snapper at the end. Its logical conclusion makes it all the stronger. But as one thinks back about it, it becomes increasingly over-serious and seems too much like the old fashioned "tirade" speech that theatergoers only accept today, if it is superbly, thrillingly done. The world does become increasingly sophisticated and demands better writing, more human understanding, even if a lot of "corn" still slips by undigested.

Good advice. At Philadelphia Garry Cleveland Myers emphasized this having a positive creative attitude in one's work. He said an editor likes "unusual turns" in a story, new material and backgrounds. "Avoid the negative always," he urged. "If you do undertake the new, let the editor know you've checked and know what you are talking about. Anything you can do well makes for goodwill." That's very true. Put your best foot forward.

REWRITE

A LITTLE PLANNING HELPS A LOT

Many of us have to work under adverse conditions of time and space, and with members of the family under foot. That is part of a professional's job: to do the best he can—under whatever conditions exist or develop, often unexpectedly. I marvelled recently at some of the skilful ad libbing and accurate reporting or quick thinking of the newspaper and radio commentators covering the convention (Republican) at Chicago. They had to work most of the time under the worst possible conditions.

However, all of us can plan, and should. I notice repeatedly that many free lances overlook the obvious fact that if their writing is worth anything, they should as a matter of course expect to invest in it & make some capital outlay. A businessman expects, quite naturally, to have to invest his money, and his only beginning worry is whether his choice of a business will earn him fair return on his money. But too many writers I have met adopt the attitude that if writing makes any money for me, I will start to put some back in the business. Actually, many of them are so eager to spend the check, in the final analysis they skimp on living up to even this rather shadowy agreement.

Moreover, the inexperienced writer too often expects the pay-off to be immediate. It sometimes does not come for years. You may get a particular experience at the wrong moment to sell it. Christmas is the time when you are likely to pick up ideas for Christmas stories, but you sell them in the summer. Then, too, your sub-conscious digests a moving emotional experience slowly. You've got to have the maturity to absorb it & the detachment to see it in perspective. There is the matter of faith also, that God & your sub-conscious will take care of the time and the place that are appropriate to use "good material".

Material is only "good" when you "see" it as such and are able to work it up. I have observed writers with emotional blind spots who have simply not been able to handle the themes I thought were "honeys". Or they were not ready at the time. It takes writers too long to win that professional self-confident feeling that they will never run out of "ideas". It takes time and maturity to become aware of the fact that ideas generate ideas and each one will suggest another. Or that by simply thinking about possible stories & building up a supply, you give your sub-conscious a chance to reject and accept. Often your sub-conscious will turn from one story to a strikingly different one. Frequently it will itch to do a certain story you have no faith in, and will make you uncomfortable until you try it. Whether you have "faith" or not, it is a good idea to combine a keen instinct for markets (general knowledge & good timing) with "hunches". That's just working as a team with your sub-conscious.

Getting back to the physical conditions, I would suggest strongly that anything you're able to do to make these more efficient, is a wise investment. Almost every writer, for instance, can use two typewriters. This is not a luxury. If you have two machines, you can use one for your mss., the other for correspondence, notes and rough drafts. You'll thus keep the alignment in better shape, so that your mss. will look like a professional typist's output. (If you have your final drafts professionally typed, figure out the cost against what it would cost to buy another typewriter. You could pay for the latter in less than a year of active production.

Moreover, there is the added efficiency of being able to use two typewriters instead of one. Or having one in reserve when one needs to be repaired. There is the question of the standard and portable machines, too. If you go on trips, or wish to carry a typewriter, two typewriters are an exceedingly valuable investment. The same thing can be said for additional desk-space, efficient files, etc. Each person has to work out their problems. You do not need the best or most expensive. But if you respect your writing, the chances are much improved that it will respect you.

In this respect it is very helpful to have even a small savings account strictly marked for your professional business. This is not always possible. But the day you're able to budget your earnings from writing to the extent that a small part of every check you earn is put back into "working capital," you have taken a big step forward. You will then have money for supplies, better equipment & travel. In these days when taxes absorb such a large percentage of everyone's earnings it is fair and smart to use your income wisely and charge off reasonable expenses that are deductible from any business or professional income. In the long run you will discover that such business-like procedure earns a higher income for you. But if it only helps you to pay your bills and have money in the bank for the income tax, you will be several city blocks ahead of the old days.

If you put your physical house in order, I feel very certain that it will help you with your actual writing. You will treat your ideas and mss. in a more business-like manner. I know writers who simply throw rejected mss. in a drawer and forget them. Or who overlook the obvious ways that they can often earn a small check which will help them to finance a larger one. Many writers blithely sit down and start a novel; just like agreeing to take Wheaties for breakfast rather than cornflakes. They don't stop to consider that they are not only investing several months of their time, but also are cancelling out income from shorter pieces that might help them to pay the overhead of that major opus... It all sums up to the fact that if you plan your program ahead, writing will take less out of your hide. The ant and the grasshopper over again. Aesop said it first.

REWRITE

A JUVENILE EDITOR SPEAKS

One of the few sessions conducted by other staff leaders at the Phila. Regional Conference that I was able to catch, was one in juvenile writing led by Dr. Gary C. Myers. I couldn't help noticing the warm and friendly way this editor of HIGHLIGHTS FOR CHILDREN tried to put his finger on the problems of writers for the under 12 years age group. Mrs. Carolyn Myers assisted him. They make a good team.

He commented on the frequency of the story about a foreign child who is ashamed of a background unlike that of his playmates. He felt the story is basically good, but usually weakened by over-emphasis of the negative aspects. Stories of appreciation, Dr. Myers feels, should stress the thing to be appreciated. They should show, not merely moralize the deep, inner love children ought naturally to have for the thing appreciated. In other words, they should convince the reader emotionally.

Poetry. Most mss. are too long. He likes short 4, 6, 8 or 10-line poems. And variety that gets away from the stock treatments. A jingle is good, but jingle alone isn't worth much. He mentioned stories told in prose he doesn't recognize is supposed to be verse... Whimsically, he said, "Don't send any. Carolyn will make me take some." The test of a good verse, Dr. Myers thinks, is that it couldn't have been written in prose. He suggested the writer try to lift his readers to something better than mere jingle.

He said good appreciation of life, like the nearby Pennsylvania Dutch background, stands by a child throughout his whole life. "Keep it very simple and uncomplex," he advised.. He stressed the colloquial and the universal. In closing he offered a list of what he termed "poor bets". He said these were overworked or given only surface emphasis.

The little horse, house or pig that is dissatisfied with his lot.

The little house that wants a family. (Two of Billy Gee's favorites, which he hasn't yet outgrown are "The Happy Family" and another about the little dog that wants children to live next door. Both of these get under the surface with real characterization.)

"There are too many cats and dogs," Dr. Myers complained unhappily. (It is almost a universal complaint among editors. Try some other animals that might come within the experience of children. Ed.)

Clouds, wind, field and stream. "It is hard to get at them, hard to personalize the inanimate objects or phases of nature." Mss. must be so good editors can't turn them back.

Mrs. Myers quipped a final: "Gary, you've taken everything away from these writers."

NEWS RIGHT FROM THE EDITORS' DESKS

The Keats-Shelley Association, Donald F. Hyde, Sec., 61 Broadway, NYC 6, has started publication of the Keats-Shelley JOURNAL. A scholarly gather-all for articles, and criticism of the two poets, Byron, Hunt and the circles they developed. Reviews books, also maintains a bibliography of current writing in this field. Should be a useful reference center for writers and teachers.

Magazine Probe. E.C. Gathings (Dem., Ark.), chairman, House of Representatives Off. Bldg., Washington, D. C., is heading a committee of 9 House members (H.R.596) seeking to determine extent to which books, magazines, comic books containing "immoral, obscene or otherwise offensive matter" are being distributed.

Franklin Publications, a non-profit organization has been formed by the publishers & others to publish and issue American books abroad. It will work with the original firms and authors responsible for the books.

The Library of American Civilization, Harry L. Selden, act. sec., 68 Wall St., NYC 6, is a somewhat similar organization, chartered by the N.Y. State Board of Regents, to combat the flood of cheap Soviet-produced books.

The University of Oklahoma Press is offering a fellowship annually on June 1 to a recent graduate of the University, who is interested in publishing as a career, with emphasis on training in scholarly methods.

The Recording & Performing Rights Bill, intended to extend copyright protection so as to cover "public performing and recording", when done for profit, of non-dramatic literary works, was passed by both houses of Congress late in June.

STRAIGHT, Carol Lee Arnold, Standard Publishing Co., 20 E. Central Parkway, Cincinnati 10, Ohio, "magazine for Christian youth," has an excellently detailed 1-page statement of its editorial requirements. Ask for it before you send in mss. Pays "up to \$25, on the 15th of month following acceptance. Length: 1,000 - 1,500 words.

GRIT, Williamsport, Pa., sends a brief rejection slip outlining reasons for rejection "to make it possible for you to effect such revisions or changes of pictures, that will open the way to reconsideration". Comforting thought. Don't overlook that chance.

BETTER HOMES & GARDENS, James M. Liston (he is "special features editor"), Des Moines 3, Iowa, uses an 11-point rejection check list in sending mss. back.

A subscriber reports AMERICAN HOME states its issues are planned months ahead, and it is buying only articles that will fit those planned lay-outs. That's a common policy.

REWRITE

(From P. 1)

There is always the danger of trying to be faithful to two masters. But more important is the basic responsibility to one's craft. The writer who is destined to be successful must learn the necessity and the art of mixing with people. He may do it, as Beethoven did, mainly through imagination since ears, nerves and physical ill-health made him like a prisoner in solitary confinement. And he must learn to make the best use of his mental, emotional and physical equipment. Like the farmer, he has to build up a craft cunning born of trial and error, of instinct & experience.

And finally, he's got to bring to bear upon every story that sense of joy, enthusiasm, and creative wonder and belief that makes a story a part of the whole unending sweep of life, not just a calculating, artificial reportorial job. I may be wrong, but I believe that the writer who does not depend upon an outside job to keep him in contact with his materials, people, but works out his own salvation through sheer intelligent perception and courageous self-discipline, is a healthier, happier and better integrated personality.

Understand that I am not arguing with Mr. Houston or indulging in controversy. It is simply that I think both sides can be firmly held. And writers should certainly think both through for themselves. The one uncontroversial fact is that every writer is "unique" and each must arrive at the final result by separate ways. Each must, therefore, take what is good for him, and use it worthily. The person who uses an outside job—to keep his life evenly balanced, can easily become too meticulous and orderly. The writer who yields to the delightful pleasure of enjoying life as a perpetual adventure, can become weakened by the wine of experience and never do a good day's work. For each there's the choice and the compendium of all of his make-up. In every phase of life and living, you will find there are two extremes, & between these an infinite variety of mental & emotional combinations.

TWO ITEMS OF HUMAN INTEREST

Here is a little story about a workshop ms. Vieve Jolley's article opening was developed into a full length article. She submitted it to Weekly UNITY. The editor suggested revisions. She made them and it was returned again, and again. I suggested she make a 4th try. She did and it stuck. Shows how rejections can be turned into acceptances.

The WCS Scholarship Fund has been assisted by a lot of good friends, and also beneficiaries, who have paid back small sums we don't consider obligations. This latter always thrills us, because it means the writers the Fund has helped wish to share in the privilege of helping others worse off than, or more handicapped than they themselves. A fine spirit. Receipts in 1952: \$33.03.

SEVERAL EDITORS SPEAK

The UPPER ROOM, J. Manning Potts, 1908 Grand Ave., Nashville 4, Tenn., which is published in 2,500,000 press runs per issue in seventeen editions, only 4 of which are in English, is one of the widest read (Protestant) devotional reading guides. It buys mss. from free lances. The current "suggested general outline" for meditation material covers the year 1953. The next deadline is for material suited for the July-August (1953) issue. It must be received not later than Oct. 1st, 1953.

The outline suggests: "Point up the spiritual idea found in each meditation by means of a good story or illustration." But here are the 8 "elements of good meditations" as summarized by the staff of "The Upper Room".

1. Clear and simple English.
2. Usually includes a pointed story.
3. Sets forth one idea only.
4. Says something fresh and vital.
5. Purely devotional.
6. Has universal Christian appeal.
7. Calls upon God for Guidance.
8. Should be pointed up with a striking thought for the day.

The editor asks for 2-inch margins, and a top length of 250 words. Pay: \$3.00 on pub.

Russell Q. Chilcote, ed. associate, writing to us, says: simplicity is stressed because this devotional is used in multiplied thousands of homes "where children are present as listeners and participants," he urges that the "fresh story or illustration ought to come from one's own personal experience."

"Finally," he adds, "we think all those who propose to write meditations for us need to be possessed of the worshipful & devotional mood. To aid them in creating that mood, we recommend a quiet reading of the testimonial, 'I led 7,000,000 people in Devotions'."

This and two other pamphlets are available gratis to anyone requesting them. The pay is small in this filler market, but we believe the rewards and the practical experience to be very worthwhile. We recommend a study of this material.

The Catholic MIRROR is now "staff written" according to Rev. Hugh Morley.

The WOMAN, 420 Lexington Ave., NYC 17, on its rejection slip states: "The WOMAN avoids, as a rule, seeming to give advice to its readers. Very few opinion articles are used, and these are backed with solid facts or present authoritative discussions of subjects, that are of great general interest...Prefer highly informative non-fiction that reads—like fiction. Even on serious subjects, the writing should be in a narrative style, compact, and sufficiently dramatic and readable so as to hold the attention of women with many interests and limited time." That's definite.

REWRITE

NEWS IN THE PUBLISHING WORLD

UNITED BOOKS, Popular Publications, Rogers Terrill, 205 East 42nd St., NYC 17, is preparing to invade the 25¢ & 35¢ reprint book field. Four books a month are expected, beginning in December, or Jan., 1953. The 25¢ books will run up to 192 pages and probably 225,000 copies; the 35¢ books 224-320 pages and 200,000 copies. Detective, adventure, & general fiction to be emphasized. Plan: hard cover publisher of originals to offer books, pay manufacturing cost, and 1¢ per 25¢ copy distribution fee; profits revert to original publisher. POPULAR has had its own chain of about 100,000 retail outlets for 15 years.

There are two angles at least to this new exploitation of books: (1) the publishers of pulp magazines (POPULAR is a big one) don't appreciate the competition offered by books. (2) This is one answer on the part of pulps and book publishers to the new large advance and high pay popular reprint publishers, COLD MEDAL and the new BALLANTINE line. Writers will have to watch the market developments, to see whether each of these new experiments prove sound. But the financial backing seems to be there as well as the distributing facilities. The trend should mean new readers and better pay for many competent writers.

Bear in mind, though, you are writing for a huge audience. Therefore, the effect must be Entertainment that is topical, exciting, popular and obvious in its appeal. No high-brow literary stuff, at least for the present, although one of the phenomena of book-publishing has been the high sales of really worthwhile books: Shakespeare, classics, and some of the more discussed science subjects pertaining to this age of science. It is plain that many persons possessed of new leisure and higher wages are finding an adventurous and satisfying outlet for personal development. It is therefore, the writer who is thoughtfully aware of the changes going on about him, who will be most likely to cash in on this new market.

Unwise Legislation. H.R. 5850 (passed) and S. 2975 (now before the Senate P. C. & Civil Service Committee) would permit the Postmaster General to impound mail addressed to any "person against whom proceedings have been instituted in connection with obtaining money through the mail in exchange for 'any obscene, lewd, lascivious, indecent, filthy or vile' material, pending final decision of the issues involved in the proceedings."

The effect of these bills is to pre-judge a publisher. The intent is good, but books, magazines and pictures of this kind are already subject to indirect censorship by the Postmaster General, who can be held accountable in the courts. REWRITE is 100% against pornographic literature. It is also anxious to see that the basic rights to free speech and personal liberty, and the protection of same are not impaired by unwise legislation.

MARKET NEWS AND COMMENT

Writers are often being told to make copy out of everything around them. Bill Heusinkveld of Denver, a member of the WCS Family, recently made a good college try in that direction. His little niece landed in a hospital, result of a freak auto accident. So he wrote a juvenile serial for her, an installment a week. If memory serves, Margaret Ayer Barnes started writing novels to while away the tedium of a stay in a French hospital.

A Sheaf of "Moved—Left No Address" Memos

AM. INSPIRATION, NYC, "Not at address given".
FIN & FACTS, Pa., suspended, June issue.
FORUM, Phila., "not at address given".
FLORNCRAFT is reported as suspended.

Correction: last month's B. A. column ought to have read: Lillian Everts. Sorry.

HOBBIES, Pearl Ann Reeder, 1006 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago 5, Ill., "not buying much."

LITERARY MARKET PLACE, R.R. Bowker Co. 65 W. 45th St., NYC 36, \$4.50. New edition issued in July. This is the most accurate and reliable address list of trade names.

LION BOOKS, 270 Park Ave., NYC 17. A new address.

Authors' Agent. Margaret Christie, 65 Madison Ave., NYC. New address.

An editor has written us in much distress over a misunderstanding with a writer about a change of payment. In the case of experimental magazines, if a ms. is accepted, the assumption is plausible that payment, even if "on pub.", will be at the then current rate. If the magazine is later able to raise payments, it would appear to do so as of a certain date. For bookkeeping reasons alone, it would be difficult to back-date previous acceptances. This would be true equally of the larger and more commercial magazines. Writers who insist on the publisher being overly generous, are likely to find their acceptances revoked and the ms. returned. It's best to be good sports and take a philosophical, accept-what-comes view in such cases.

The ARCHER, Box 3857, Victory Center Sta., North Hollywood, Cal., has a new list of poetry prize contests. Close: Aug. 15th. Sponsored prize contests close Nov. 15th. Also: "Tall Tales & Liars' Contest" (Prose, 300 or less words), closes: Nov. 15th.

Wilfred Brown, one of The ARCHER editors, won the Radio & TV News Club, So. Cal., annual awards for "Best Consistent TV Newswriting" at KNBH, L. A., Cal. Good!

Maine Tourists. Fifty information booths, scattered over the state, & each state police patrol car loaded with maps, etc., will help you

REWRITE

NEWS AT HOME AND ABROAD

The Piscataqua Pens, YWCA, 27 Daniel St., Portsmouth, N. H., are meeting monthly, the third Friday of each month, at 7:30 P.M. A new writers' club, the outgrowth of a writing class conducted by Doris Marston, Maine writer and editor. Ten of her students, six other writers and Doris got the group formed. Others are welcome. Only rules: they'll start promptly and each member will be obliged to bring a ms. to each meeting. Doris is a long time member of the WCS Family and active on the board of the Maine State Writers Conference. REWRITE has already given moral support to this new club.

The MYSTERIOUS TRAVELER, Robert Arthur, ... Room 1907, 212 5th Ave., NYC, has "just gone quarterly. This means we won't be needing a new supply of material for some months. Consequently, we are not currently in the market. We will advise writers when we are beginning to read material again." (June 11.)

Try, Try, Try Again! Kathryn Wilson made a sale (we listed it in the July issue) she considered a "big" one. It happened on—the 12th submission! "So I say to all," she advised, "never give up. If it's good, it will sell somewhere." Good advice.

Curiously, speaking at the opening banquet of the Phila. Regional Conference, I stressed this same idea. I reminded the group of a story that Isabelle Moore, slick writer, in an article in REWRITE, once told of rewriting 22 times for TODAY'S WOMAN. And of a comedy that Helen Hayes once played. Miss Hayes in a talk to the 47 Workshop Club said she had rehearsed 16 different endings, and she did not feel the last one was a satisfactory or completely logical one. They used it because they had to have some kind of ending.

This sense of "craft consciousness, a combination of humility in the face of professional problems, craft competence and craft conscience," is perhaps one of the best reasons for going to summer conferences or becoming a member of a writers' club. For you learn that other writers, bigger ones, face the same difficulties and trials as you do. And you realize the necessity of standing up, of demanding "high standards" of your mind and emotions, in the face of the problems and trials you meet.

The Center Box.. Sir Ronald Adam is a member of the British Council, which has charge of cultural relations in England and also in the Commonwealth.

It is unthinkable that an international exchange of ideas which dealt exclusively with education and the sciences could present a true picture of any country, and yet it is the creative arts which come most often under the fire of the critics when programs of cultural relations are attacked, as they so often are by the press. In an industrial age, and particularly at a time of balance of exchange crises, it is difficult to convince the critics that money spent on an exhibition of modern paintings, a tour of a ballet company or an international conference of writers is not money wasted. The results of all exchanges are difficult to assess, and it is easier to understand that concrete results may flow from visits of scientists and technical experts. The effects of the creative arts can rarely be measured in a concrete fashion, for the impact is on the mind of the individual, and results cannot be immediate. France, more than any other nation, has realized this and has reaped the benefit of her years of work in the exchange of the creative arts.

Sir Ronald Adam, Bulletin, Institute of Int. Educ.

Inescapable Question: Got a Market List?

Textbook for Article Writers and Photogs. During my travels to the Phila. Regional Conference I obtained a copy of the 60-page detailed book of instructions prepared by Lawrence E. Laybourne, gen. manager, TIME, LIFE, FORTUNE, and the Magazine of BUILDING U.S. & Canadian News Service. This is, of course, a private news gathering service of 55 "staff correspondents" in 13 key cities, supplemented by 155 "stringer correspondents" all over the U. S. and Canada.

It is for these latter that the booklet is prepared and, we gather, kept up to date. It tells just how TIME and LIFE accumulate information from these patrol sentries & whom to address special types of data, including pictures. It is an inside view of the intricate news gathering mechanism set up to get "fast, accurate, vivid reporting".

These 155 stringer men and women for most part are experienced city editors, city hall reporters, legislative correspondents, telegraph editors and free-lance writers. Most of them hold responsible jobs. It is not everyone who can become a stringer for the aristocratic TIME and LIFE organization. But I believe responsible writers with handles-to-their-names, and teachers of writing can obtain copies of this "bible" for potential serious correspondents. And I would strongly urge writers aiming at the big time magazines, as well as photographers, to obtain a copy. And study it carefully. It will make you a more responsible, resourceful correspondent or contributor to any newspaper, or magazine you may seek to hit. It will furthermore, open your eyes to the competition & standards you will meet in the higher ranks of slick journalism today.

THOUGHT & ACTION, Roy Hessen, Amityville, N. Y., again revised its pay policy June 23. Non-fiction: 1¢ a word, 500 top. Fiction: \$1 per ms., 500 top. Verse: Maximum 8 lines no pay. All payments on Acc. Overstocked: poetry and fiction. Featurettes wanted.

Authors' League. Robert J. Landry, chairman of the publicity & membership committee, has been stepping up the aggressiveness of League's news about activities and work.

Recently, League's officials have been trying to show Congress the need that professional people have for storing extra large earnings, in exceptional years in a retirement fund instead of crippling taxes. That is good sense. Talk it up!

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DO YOU KNOW HOW GOOD (BAD) YOU ARE?

Where the inexperienced writer falls down and permits a great gulf to open up between him and the writer who sells, is largely in the sheer quality of his ideas and workmanship. So many times I am tempted to say to a writer who consults me about his inability, his puzzling failure, to sell, "you just do not think, feel and write ably enough." Sometimes I do say that. When I think the writer is courageous enough and earnest enough, so that he can understand the full implication of what I mean. For that is not necessarily a lifelong curse, an infinite casting out into eternal darkness.

No, it simply means that a writer doesn't write well enough now. It is therefore, only a challenge. It means: "You do not write well enough now. What are you going to do about it? Do you want to write for that faster company hard enough to make the extra effort to get there? Or are you content, willing just to drift along in your present rut? To close your eyes to ambition's urge?"

We have a saying in our house, that we almost never tell any writer that he is "hopeless". We believe there is a niche for each and every person, man or woman, yes, children, too, who wishes to persevere and seek out markets within his or her reach. These may be only recipes or one-line jokes. But if a writer really wants to write, he will eventually come to realize that these aren't to be despised. By filling them he is fulfilling God's purpose for him, and achieving his share of the creative life. And over a good many years I've seen large numbers of writers, who found a satisfaction in thus discovering their personal outlet, their little corner of usefulness. And small corners lead to big ones.

One of the facts you gradually absorb and become resigned to in Show Business (and every writer is part of that!) is that everyone cannot be a bestseller or a "super-colossal, top-billed act". Elva and I couldn't help noticing at the circus a day or two ago the huge number of show folk doing menial and humble jobs under exceedingly uncomfortable circumstances. But they would ask, if you talked with them, no sympathy. They are part of the "Big Show". They love it as they love life itself. The smallest, third-rate opening novelty has its "secret sense of self importance," to quote John Galsworthy's memorable phrase.

This disparity of quality in material and craftsmanship, as well as the fact that the disparity need not be an irreconcilable fact of nature, is one of the hardest things you have to teach. Every teacher worthy of that great title, recognizes that the gifts, and talents of life are not doled out equally. A writer, figuratively speaking, may be flat-chested or have one leg shorter than the other. But as the French are wont to say: "with the spirit there, all things are possible."

Here in this country we call it the "competitive spirit". Call it what you will, or say as the Church does, that no sinner is irredeemably lost, it is nevertheless true that where there is desire, sincere, undefeatable ambition to succeed, a writer can lift himself above the level that his seemingly allotted talent would limit him to. But it can only be after he has had the imaginative inspiration to look squarely and objectively at himself and find the answer implied and posed by this article. "See" his own defects.

When a writer has the innate courage and honesty to appraise dispassionately his choice of materials and the craftsmanship he applies to their use, he has taken the first step in bettering himself. Sometimes it may be a disilluisioning step, but it need never be a humiliating or shameful one. Writers sometimes express a wish that I had been more "constructive" in my analysis of their mas. Elva continually tells me to emphasize that side of the analysis. It is a good thought, and one that cannot be stressed too much.

One will fail, however, if he attempts to build a house on a pile of sand, by shutting his eyes to the fact that the sand, not rock, is there. To repeat, when one faces squarely his problem and begins to think what has to be done about it, he has taken the first step in solving it. And while the beginning effort may not be the correct one, the fact that one has begun and is making progress is in itself alone an exciting and thrilling, a purging experience.

The creative process is an infinitely slow one. Many writers sit before a typewriter & blank piece of paper, wringing their hands. "I can't plot," they wail. It is easy to be come panic-stricken. That is why I constantly stress the simple, physical device of using a diagram of lines drawn between marks, which signify the names of each character & force in the story. And thinking of these as two-way relationship lines. It is something tangible to do to fill in these lines, to be as complete as one possibly can in determining what one knows about each of the forces and characters, and all of the complex relationships. You begin to close that gulf.

Plotting, after all, is an act of faith. I have often felt as I have helped writers to explore these relationships, that we were a party pushing along a wooded trail in heavy fog. Repeatedly we miss the blaze-marks and cairns. We have to retrace our steps, and a mere physical determination to crash our way through the fog is of no avail. Panic helps not a bit. We have to have faith that God & our own gentle good sense will help us pick up the trail, one blaze at a time. In story writing I have never known it to fail that a faith of this kind pays off. We may find we have a dud on our hands, but at least movement forward in our overall goal is gained. More often, this process of feeling our way forward is exciting. "Where the spirit is!..